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L A W S  
Divine *and* Human,

FOR THE

OBSERVATION

OF THE

LORD'S DAY, &c.

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THE MOST LIBERAL OF THE ONLY MEANS  
OF THE LORD'S DAY, &c.

*Shortly to be published,*  
*By the SAME AUTHOR,*  
T H E  
C O N S T A N T R E S I D E N C E  
O F T H E  
C L E R G Y  
O N T H E I R  
L I V I N G S  
S H E W N T O B E  
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a n d F I R M L Y F I X s u c h R E S I D E N C E.



L A W S  
Divine *and* Human,  
FOR THE  
O B S E R V A T I O N  
OF THE  
L O R D ' S D A Y.

ILLUSTRATED and ENFORCED  
BY THE  
AUTHORITIES and SENTIMENTS  
O F  
LEARNED COMMENTATORS  
AND OTHER  
Great and very eminent A U T H O R S.

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By the V<sup>icar</sup> of S——, in KENT.

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*Thou shalt Honour the Lord on his Holy Day, not doing thine own Ways, nor finding thine own Pleasure, nor speaking thine own Words. Isaiah lviii. 13.*

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L O N D O N :

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L. A. W. S.

Divine and Human



OBSERVATION

LORDS DAY

ISSUED BY THE

AUTHORITIES OF THE

LEARNED COMMENTATORS

AND OTHERS

ON THE

PROPHETIC BOOKS

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT

AND THE

NEW TESTAMENT

AND THE

APPOCALYPSE



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FOR THE  
O B S E R V A T I O N  
OF THE  
L O R D ' S D A Y, &c.



WE will begin with the *First* Establishment of the *Sabbath*; and we must fix it at the *Creation* of the World.—*And God blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all his Work, which God created and made.* Gen. ii. 3.

God blessed, and sanctified the Seventh Day, *i. e.* He granted it this sacred Prerogative of being free from bodily Labours, to be employ'd by Men, in Exercises of Piety—in the Pub-

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lick, and exprefs Service of God, and to give him Thanks for his fore-created Blessings.

The Lord JEHOVAH, Creator of Heaven and Earth, ordain'd to his People this Observation of the Sabbath-Day, for a *Sign* and *Cognizance*, that *He* should be their God, and no other. For by sanctifying the *Seventh* Day, after they had labour'd Six, they profess'd themselves Vassals, and Worshippers of *That only God*, who created the Heaven and the Earth; and, having spent Six Days in that great Work, rested the Seventh Day, and therefore commanded them to observe this suitable Distribution of their Time, as a *Badge* and *Livery*, that their religious Service was appropriate to Him alone.

This was the Command given by God to Mankind, from the Beginning of the World. And it is not to be doubted, but that accordingly, *such* a Sabbath did continue to be observ'd, *so long* as any Sense of true Religion remain'd upon the Earth. But as Men liv'd farther off from the *Creation*, and Wickedness prevail'd over the Face of the Earth, and the true Worship of God was corrupted by almost an universal Idolatry, *so* was the Solemn Day of his Worship neglected likewise.

God therefore was pleas'd to *renew* this Command to the Israelites, presently after their passing thro' the Red Sea, when he began to give the *Manna* to them. For then he commanded ~~them~~ to gather it every Morn-  
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ing for *Six Days*; but on the *Sixth Day* to provide a *double Quantity* for the *next Day*, because, that thereon they should *keep the Sabbath* to the Lord, and *no Manna* should fall, or be gather'd upon it.—

*This is That, which the Lord hath said—To-morrow is the Rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the Lord.—Which very Words* seem to shew, that there had been *some Observation* of a *Sabbath* heretofore, and was not wholly a *new Thing*; for if it had, they could not have *understood* Moses, nor known *what* he meant.—The Memory of the Creation, and the Worship of God were preserv'd in *some Measure* in the Minds of Mankind, by the *Seventh Day's* being appointed to be kept Holy. And therefore, the more Pious any People were, the greater Respect they had to this Day. But when the World grew very wicked *before the Flood*, as they little thought of God, so, it is likely, they neglected all Distinction between *this Day* and *others*: And the Dispersion of People *after the Flood*, very much blotted it out of their Minds, as it did many other good Things: And by their cruel Servitude in *Egypt*, all Observation of the *Seventh Day* was so far abolish'd, that the very Memory of it seems to have been lost among them. God, therefore, when he brought them out of this Slavery, *renew'd* (as has been said) his Command for the Observation of the *Sabbath*—with the *Addition* of another

Ground for it—their Deliverance from the Egyptian Bondage.

And both these Reasons are given by Moses, for God's commanding it to be observ'd; *Exod. xx. 11. For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the Seventh Day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.* And *Deut. v. 15. Remember, that thou wast a Servant in the Land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, thro' a mighty Hand, and by a stretch'd out Arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath Day.*

There are two different Causes, says *Maimonides*, for this Precept, from two different Effects. For when Moses explain'd to us the Cause of this Celebration in the *Promulgation* of the Ten Commandments, he saith, it was, because, *in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth.* The first Cause is, the Glory and Magnificence of this Day, (as it is said.)—*Therefore the Lord blessed the Seventh Day, and sanctified it.*

But, that he gave this Precept of the Sabbath unto *Us* (the Israelites) and commanded *Us* to observe it, was,—*Because we were Servants in Egypt:* All which Time we could not serve according to our Will and Pleasure, nor had any Rest, or observ'd a Sabbath. And, therefore, God gave us this special Precept of Resting, and Cessation from Labour,

to join together these two Reasons, *viz.* The Belief of the Beginning of the World, which presently suggests to us the Being of a God and *then* the Memory of God's Benefits unto us, in giving us Rest from our intolerable Burden in Egypt. And by this Institution (saith the same Author) God procur'd great Ease to all Sorts of Men, by freeing a *seventh* Part of their Lives from wearisome Labour; which hath another Blessing in Conjunction with it, that it perpetually preserv'd and confirm'd that most precious History and Doctrine, concerning the Creation of the World.

So much may suffice, for shewing the Nature of the *First*, and *Jewish Sabbath*.—The *next* Step is to satisfy the Reader, *how far* the Command obliges a *Christian*.

And the *Christian*, as well as the *Jew*, after *six* Days spent in his own Works, is to sanctify the *Seventh*, that he may profess himself thereby a Servant of God, the *Creator* of Heaven and Earth, as well as the *Jew*; tho' they differ in the *Designation* of the Day. For the *Christian* chuses the *first* Day of the Week, and calls it the *Lord's Day*, that he may profess himself also a Servant of that God, who on the Morning of that Day vanquish'd *Satan*, the spiritual *Pharaoh*, and redeem'd us from spiritual Thraldom, by raising *Jesus Christ* our Lord from the dead; begetting us, instead of an earthly *Canaan*, to an *Inheritance incorruptible in the Heavens*.

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In short, the *Christian* by the Day He hallow's, professes himself a *Christian*; that is, as St. Paul speaks—*To believe in Him that raised up Jesus from the dead*; so that the *Jew* and *Christian*, tho' they fall not on the same Day, yet make their *Designation* of their Day on the like Ground—The *Jews*, their Memorial-Day of their Deliverance from their temporal *Egypt*—the *Christians*, their Memorial-Day of their Deliverance from the spiritual *Egypt*, and spiritual *Pharaoh*. For, the Deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt* by the Ministry of *Moses*, was intended for a Type and Pledge of the spiritual Deliverance, which was to come by *Christ*—their *Canaan* also, to which they march'd, being a Type of the Heavenly Inheritance, which the Redeemed by *Christ* do look for.

Well might *that Day*, which carried with it a Remembrance of that great Deliverance from the Egyptian Servitude, resign all the Sanctity or Solemnity due to it, when *That Morning, That Day* once appear'd, upon which a far greater Redemption was confirm'd.

And *this Day*, the Apostles from the Beginning, did most religiously observe, by their meeting together for holy Purposes, and to perform religious Duties.—This we may observe all along in the Sacred Story.

And thus the Observation of that Day, which the *Jews* did sanctify ceased, and was buried with our Saviour; and in the Stead  
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of it, the religious Observation of *that Day*, on which the Son of God rose from the Dead, by a constant Practice of the blessed Apostles, was transmitted to the Church of God, and so continued in all Ages.

This Day is sometimes call'd *Sunday*, because it happened on that Day of the Week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the *Sun*; and, therefore, as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made Use of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governors.

This Title continued after the World became Christian; and seldom it is, that it passeth under any other Name, in the Imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperors.

But, the most proper and prevailing Name was, the Lord's Day, as 'tis call'd by St. *John* himself, as being that Day of the Week, whereon our Lord made his triumphant Return from the Dead.

It was the principal and most noted among the sacred and ecclesiastical Festivals, and observ'd with great Veneration in the ancient Church, from the very Time of the Apostles; as said before.

After *them*, and *their* Example, the *primitive Christians* constantly observ'd it; meeting together for Prayer, expounding, and hearing the Scriptures, Celebrations of the Sacraments, and other publick Duties of Religion. *Pliny*, who was a Heathen Magistrate in the Reign of *Trajan*, not long after St. *John's* Death, took the Ac-

count of the Christian Assemblies, from the Mouths of some apostatizing Christians; and they told him, their Custom was to meet together early in the Morning before it was light, *on a certain fix'd Day, to sing their Morning Hymns to Christ.* They did not think it enough to read, pray, and praise God at *Home*, but made Conscience of appearing in the *publick Assemblies*—from which nothing but Sicknes, and absolute Necessity did detain them. And if Sick or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing troubled them more than that they could not come to Church, and join their Devotions to the Common Services. If Persecution, at any Time, forc'd them to keep a little close, yet no sooner was there the least Mitigation, but they presently return'd to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. No trivial Pretences, no light Excuses were then admitted for any one's Absence from the Congregation; but according to the Merits of the Cause, severe Censures were pass'd upon them. The Synod of *Eliberis* provided, that if any Man, dwelling in a City, should for three Lord's Days absent himself from the Church, he should for some Time be suspended the Communion, that he might appear to be corrected for his Fault. They allow'd no separate Assemblies, no Congregations, but what met in the public Church.

If any Man took upon him to make a Breach, and to draw People into Corners, he was

was presently condemn'd, and a suitable Penalty put upon him.

When *Eustatbius* Bishop of *Sebastia* (a Man pretending to great Strictness, and Austerity of Life) began to cast off the Discipline of the Church, and to introduce many odd Observations of his own; and among others to keep Meetings in private Houses, drawing away many, but especially *Women* (as the Historian observes) who, leaving their Husbands, were led away with Error, and from that into great Filthiness and Impurity.—No sooner did the Bishop of those Parts discover it, but meeting in Council at *Gangra*, about the Year 340, they condemn'd and cast them out of the Church, passing these two Canons among the rest.—*If any one shall teach that the House of God is to be despised, and the Assemblies that are held in it, let him be accursed.*

*If any one shall take upon him out of the Church, privately to preach at Home, and making light of the Church, shall do those Things that belong only to the Church, without the Presence of the Priest, and the Leave and Allowance of the Bishop, let him be accursed.*

Such was the Care of the Church in making many good Laws of Discipline, for the Censure and Punishment of *those*, who in any considerable Degree violated the just Observation of the *Lord's Day*.

And happy would it be for the Church, if Men would never *deny* themselves the Benefit of her Communion in religious Assemblies, but upon *such* Reasons of Necessity, as carry at first Sight, in their very Nature, their own Apology; a great Difference being to be made between *Necessity* and *Contempt*.

The holy and religious Duty of Service towards God, concerneth us *one* Way as we are *Men*, and *another* Way, in that we are joined as *Parts* to that *visible, Mystical Body*, which is his Church.

As *Men* we are at our *own* Choice, both for *Time* and *Place*, according to the Exigence of our own Occasions in *private*. But the Service which we do, as *Members of a Public Body*, is *Public*; and for that Reason must needs be accounted by so much worthier, as a *whole Society* of such Condition, exceedeth the Worth of *any one*. In Consideration of which there are most special Promises made unto Christian Assemblies. *St. Paul*, tho' as likely to prevail with God as much as *any one*, did notwithstanding, think it much more both for *God's* Glory and his *own* Good, if *Prayers* might be made, and *Thanks* yielded in his Behalf, by a *Number of Men*. The Prince and People of *Nineveh*, assembling themselves as a main Army of Supplicants, *God* saw their Works, and repented of the Evil that he said, he would do unto them. *Tertullian's* Sentiments of the Force of Public Prayer in

*the Church of God, are worthy our particular Notice.—We come by Troops to the Place of Assembly (says he) that being banded together, we may be Supplicants enough to besiege (as it were) God with our Prayers.—These Forces are acceptable to Him.*

And when we publickly make our Prayers, it cannot be, but that we do it with *much more Comfort than in private*; for that the Things we ask *publickly*, are approv'd as Needful and Good, in the Judgment of *All*—We hear them sought for, and desir'd with *Common Consent*. And thus, *much Help and Furtherance* is yielded, in Case *our Zeal and Devotion* towards God, be slack and heavy—The Alacrity and Fervor of *others* serveth as a present Spur. For even *Prayer itself* (saith St. Basil) *when it hath not the Concert of many Voices to strengthen it, is not itself*. Moreover, the Good which we do by *Public Prayer*, is *more than can be done in private*; for besides, that the Advantage is *no less* to ourselves, the *whole Church* is much benefited by *our Example*. And consequently, tho' the secret Neglect of our Duty, in this Kind, only turns to *our own Hurt*; yet *one Man's Contempt* of the *Common Prayer* of the Church of God, may be, and often is hurtful to many. And on *this Consideration*, the Prophet David so often voweth unto God the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, in the *Congregation*—*so earnestly* exhorteth others to sing

Praises unto the Lord *in his Courts--in his Sanctuary*: And *so much* complaineth of *his own* uncomfortable Exile, in which, tho' he sustain'd many grievous Indignities, and endur'd the Want of many Pleasures, and Honours enjoy'd before, yet, as if *This one* were his *only* Grief, and the *rest* not felt, his Speeches are *all* of the Heavenly Benefit of *Public Assemblies*, and the Happiness of *such* as had free Access thereto.

*The Lord loveth the Gates of Zion, more than all the Dwellings of Jacob*; and yet, *how is his House forsaken*! How many are there in every Parish, who never go into it—that are never seen in the Congregation of the Saints! *Go round about Zion*, and tell its *back-sliding Children*, who mind not the Things of God, but rather live in open Defiance of *his Laws*.

They may not reckon it quite *so safe* (as 'tis a Matter of *present* Concern) to do so by the *Laws of their Country*; and therefore a few of them shall be exhibited to your View, and serious Consideration.

And it is enjoin'd by 1 *Eliz. Cap. ii. Sect. xiv.* That every Person, or Persons shall resort to their Parish Church or Chapel upon every Sunday, and other Days ordain'd to be kept Holy, and then and there abide orderly and soberly, during the Time of Common Prayer, Preaching, and other Service of God there to be

be us'd, and ministred, upon Pain of Punishment by the Censure of the Church, and also upon Pain, that every Person so offending, shall forfeit for every such Offence Twelve-pence, to be levied by the Church-wardens of the Parish where such Offence shall be done, to the Use of the Poor of the same Parish, of the Goods, Lands, and Tenements, of such Offender by Way of Distress.

Where it is to be observ'd, that there are *three* Offences mention'd in this Statute, for which the said Mulct of one Shilling is to be impos'd for every Time they are committed. First, for absenting from Church. Secondly, for not abiding there 'till Divine Service and Sermon, be ended. And Thirdly, for not behaving themselves orderly and soberly while there. And also that over and above the said Mulct, the Offenders are to be punished by the Censures of the Church. And therefore, notwithstanding they have paid the said Mulct, they must also be presented for the same, at the next Visitation.

It is also enacted by the 23 *Eliz.* Cap. i. Sect. v. That every Person above the Age of Sixteen Years, which shall not repair to some Church or Chapel, but forbear the same, contrary to the Tenor of a Statute, made in the First Year of her Majesty's Reign, and being thereof lawfullg convicted, shall forfeit to the  
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Queen's Majesty for every Month, which he or she shall so forbear, Twenty Pounds of lawful English Money; and that over, and besides the said Forfeitures, every Person so forbearing by the Space of Twelve Months as aforesaid, shall for his or her Obstinacy, after Certificate thereof in Writing made, into the Court, commonly called, the King's Bench, by the Ordinary of the Diocese, or a Justice of Peace for the County, where such Offender shall dwell, or be, bound with two sufficient Sureties in the Sum of Two Hundred Pounds at least to the good Behaviour, and so to continue bound until such Time, as the Persons so bound do conform themselves, and come to the Church according to the Meaning of the said Statute made in the said First Year of the Queen's Majesty's Reign.

And to prevent the Profanation of the Lord's Day by the 1 Jac. Cap. xxii. No Cordwainer, or Shoemaker, shall shew to the Intent to put to Sale any Shoes, Boots, &c. upon the Sunday, upon Pain of forfeiting for every Pair of Shoes, Boots, &c. made, sold, shew'd, or put to Sale, contrary to the true Meaning of this Act, three Shillings and four Pence, and the just, and full Value of the same.

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By the 3 Car. I. c. ii. (being an Act for the Reformation of sundry Abuses committed on the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday) it is enacted, That if any Butcher by himself, or any other for him by his Privy, or Consent, shall kill, or sell any Animals on the Lord's Day, That then every such Butcher shall forfeit, and lose, for every such Offence, the Sum of six Shillings and eight Pence.

By the 29 Car. II. c. vii. (An Act for the better Observation, and keeping Holy the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday) It is enacted, That all and every Person, and Persons whatever, shall on every Lord's Day apply themselves to the Observation of the same, by exercising themselves thereon, in the Duties of Piety and true Religion, publickly, and privately; and that no Tradesman, Artificer, Workman, Labourer, or other Person whatsoever, shall do, or Exercise any worldly Business, or Work of their ordinary Calling upon the Lord's Day, or any Part thereof: And that every Person being of the Age of fourteen Years and upwards, offending in the Premises, shall for every such Offence, forfeit the Sum of five Shillings: And that no Person, or Persons, whatsoever, shall publickly cry, shew forth, or expose to sale any Wares, Merchandizes, Fruits, Herbs, Goods, or Chattles whatsoever, upon the Lord's Day,

Day, or any Part thereof, upon Pain, that every Person so offending, shall forfeit the same Goods, so cried, or shewed forth, or exposed to sale. And it is further enacted, That no Drover, Horse-courser, Waggoner, Butcher, Pighler, their, or any of their Servants, shall travel, or come into his, or their Inn, or Lodging upon the Lord's Day, or any Part thereof, upon Pain, that each, and every such Offender shall forfeit twenty Shillings for every such Offence: And that if any Person offending in any of the Premises, shall be thereof convicted before any Justice of Peace of the County, or the chief Officer, or Officers, or any Justice of Peace, or within any City, Borough, or Town Corporate, where the said Offence shall be committed, upon his or their View, or Confession of the Party, or Proof of any one, or more Witnesses by Oath (which the said Justices, chief Officer, or Officers, are by this Act authorized to administer) the said Justice, or chief Officer, or Officers, shall give Warrant under his or their Hand and Seal to the Constables, or Church-wardens of the Parish, or Parishes, where such Offence shall be committed, to seize the said Goods cried, or shewed forth, or put to sale, as aforesaid, and to sell the same and to levy the said other Forfeitures, or Penalties by Way of Distress, and Sale of the Goods of every such

such Offender distrained, rendring to the said Offenders the Overplus of the Money raised thereby; and in Default of such Distress, or in Case of Insufficiency, or Inability of the said Offender to pay the said Forfeitures, or Penalties, That then the Party Offending be set publickly in the Stocks by the Space of two Hours.

And because *many*, instead of employing the Lord's Day in the *Duties*, for which it is set apart, are apt to mispend it in Idleness, and Looseness, at Alehouses, Taverns, and other public Places of Debauchery.—For the preventing hereof, the Churchwardens ought frequently, on the Lord's Day, to visit such Houses, both *in* Time of divine Service, and also *out* of it. And if they find any tipling in the said House, they are to make them pay three Shillings and four Pence for the same; and the Owner of the House ten Shillings for entertaining them; and also five Shillings more for using his trade on the Lord's Day; and if it be in Time of divine Service, they may make every one of them pay also one Shilling for being absent from Church. Jac. I. c. ix. 4 Jac. I. c. v. 1 Car. I. c. iv.

*These are the Laws of the Land; and we are commanded to submit ourselves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake. And wilt thou not be afraid of the Power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have Praise of the*

*same. For he is a Minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is Evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the Sword in vain; for he is the Minister of God—A Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil.*

If thou lovest thy Country, and the Christian Religion, remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. i. e. Be always mindful of this Day, to make a Difference between it, and all other Days; and fail not to perform the Duties of it (Thou, and thy Household) in the House of God.

We have the Testimony of the highest Authority (expressed in the Act of Uniformity, 14 Car. II. c. iv.) That the Service of the Church, &c. is very comfortable to all good People desirous to live in Christian Conversation, and most profitable to the State of this Realm. Upon which the Mercy, Favour, and Blessing of Almighty God, is in no wise so readily, and plentifully poured, as by Common Prayers, due using of the Sacraments, and often Preaching of the Gospe', with the Devotion of the Hearers. And yet, notwithstanding this, a great Number of People in divers Parts of this Realm, following their own Sensuality, and living without Knowledge, and due Fear of God, do wilfully abstain, and refuse to come to their Parish Churches, where Common Prayer, Administration of the Sacraments, and preaching of the Word of God is used.

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As the Institution of the Lord's Day then appears to be of infinite Importance to the *State*, and to the Welfare of the World in general, it is Matter of the utmost Astonishment, that it should be so openly, and so scandalously profaned, as it is——That *so many* People should *despise the House of God*.

But, *they will not bear Instruction, and be wise*——They will only *be wise in their own Conceits*.

They might consider, that our Way to Heaven does not lie so very ready, and plain, that we cannot miss it; and it may be dangerous to trust *too much* to our own Judgment.——That our surest Course therefore, would be to observe the Footsteps of our Forefathers——to ask for the *good, old Way*, and to *walk therein*, for fear of being led aside into untrodden Paths, or carried headlong in the broad Highway of Profaneness, with the mistaking Multitude.

They might also confide in the Opinion of a worthy Casuist——That by the going but in the Way that *so many* good Men have done, we may hope sooner to meet *Christ*, than in any By-way of *our own* Invention.

Return, return then, O ye *that wander out of the Way of Understanding*, and go into the Gates of Zion, chusing (with *David*) to be rather *Door-keepers in the House of God*, than to dwell (*a Moment longer*) in the Tents of Ungodliness.

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And let all the Tribes of *Israel* think it *their* Duty to go up also to *Zion* (especially at *this* Time) to testify unto *Israel*, their hearty Good-will and Affection for *Jerusalem*; and with united Intercessions---with one Mind, and one Mouth, ardently pray at the Throne of God, That Peace, and Happiness, Truth, and Justice, Religion, and Piety, may be established within her Borders for all Generations.

March 31, 1759.



F I N I S.

